

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A collaborative graphical viewing system, comprising:
a markup module which allows graphical markup items to be created and associated with a camera position, said markup module comprising a store utility
5 which stores said created graphical markup items and associated camera position in persistent storage.

2. A collaborative graphical viewing system in accordance with claim 1,
wherein:
10 said markup module comprises a load utility which loads said stored graphical markup items and associated camera position from persistent storage into a viewing area.

3. A collaborative graphical viewing system in accordance with claim 1,
15 comprising:
a collaboration function which allows a plurality of users to simultaneously view said loaded graphical markup items associated with said camera position.

4. A collaborative graphical viewing system in accordance with claim 3,
20 wherein:
said store utility allows said created graphical markup items and associated camera position to be stored in a saved collaboration session in said persistent storage.

25 5. A collaborative graphical viewing system in accordance with claim 1,
wherein:
said store utility allows said created graphical markup items and associated camera position to be stored in local persistent storage.

30 6. A collaborative graphical viewing system in accordance with claim 1,
wherein:

said store utility allows said created graphical markup items and associated camera position to be stored in said persistent storage via a database management system.

5 7. A method for maintaining persistence of graphical markup items in a collaborative graphics environment, comprising:

 associating graphical markup items created by a user to a camera position, said camera position corresponding to a view of a model loaded into a viewing area; and

10 storing positioning information describing said camera position and said associated graphical markup items in persistent storage.

 8. A method in accordance with claim 7, comprising:

15 loading said stored graphical markup items associated with said camera position into said viewing area.

 9. A method in accordance with claim 7, comprising:

 connecting a plurality of users to said collaborative graphics environment; and

20 displaying said loaded graphical markup items in said viewing area of each of said connected users.

 10. A method in accordance with claim 9, wherein said storing step comprises:

25 storing said created graphical markup items and associated camera position in a saved collaboration session in said persistent storage.

 11. A method in accordance with claim 7, wherein said storing step comprises:

30 storing said created graphical markup items and associated camera position in local persistent storage.

12. A method in accordance with claim 7, wherein said storing step comprises:

storing said created graphical markup items and associated camera
5 position in said persistent storage via a database management system.

13. A computer readable storage medium tangibly embodying program instructions implementing a method for maintaining persistence of graphical markup items in a collaborative graphics environment, the method comprising the
10 steps of:

associating graphical markup items created by a user to a camera position, said camera position corresponding to a view of a model loaded into a viewing area; and

storing positioning information describing said camera position and said
15 associated graphical markup items in persistent storage.

14. A computer readable storage medium in accordance with claim 13, the method comprising:

loading said stored graphical markup items associated with said camera
20 position into said viewing area.

15. A computer readable storage medium in accordance with claim 13, the method comprising:

connecting a plurality of users to said collaborative graphics environment;
25 and

displaying said loaded graphical markup items in said viewing area of each of said connected users.

16. A computer readable storage medium in accordance with claim 15, the method comprising:
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storing said created graphical markup items and associated camera position in a saved collaboration session in said persistent storage.

17. A computer readable storage medium in accordance with claim 13,
5 the method comprising:

storing said created graphical markup items and associated camera position in local persistent storage.

18. A computer readable storage medium in accordance with claim 13,
10 the method comprising:

storing said created graphical markup items and associated camera position in said persistent storage via a database management system.